

Practical Discourse  
ON THE  
Late Earthquakes:  
WITH  
An Historical Account  
OF  
PRODIGES  
And their  
Various Effects.

By a Reverend Divine.

Amos 3. 8.

*The Lord hath spoken, who can but prophesy?*

L O N D O N.

Printed for J. Dineen at the Raven in the Strand. 1687.

PRUDIGES  
OF  
An Historical Account  
WITH  
The Description:  
ON THE  
Political Discourse

By a Reverend Divine

Amos 1. 3.

The Lord speaketh who can declare his purpose?

LONDON

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# THE PREFACE TO THE READERS.

**I** wish I could say with the Apostle, 1 Thes. 5. 1. Of the Times and the Seasons ye have no need that I write unto you: But alas it is too evident that there is a great and unavoidable necessity of reminding you seriously of the fatal circumstances of the Times wherein you live. Is it not evident that God is angry with us? Is it not easy to read the *Black-writing on the Wall* against us? Are not the Vials of God's wrath discharging themselves upon us? Have we not had of late a Terrible Intimation of God's Displeasure, as well as of his Power and Sovereignty, in shaking the Earth? I have expected that some Pious Minister would put you in mind of this Important matter, and treat you with a subject of so Weighty and Universal a Concern. But now fearing that Warnings and Admonitions of this nature might come too late, I have here adventured publicly to admonish you both of your Danger and your Duty in this sad Scene of Providence wherein you are now plac'd. I remember that Reverend and Good Man Dr. Jackson) whom I shall have occasion to mention in the following Discourse) hath presented the World with a small

\* Treatise, somewhat of the like Nature with this which I \* 2 vol. of his Works here offer. Indeed he was a Workman that needed not to be ashamed, he was a diligent observer of God's administrations in the World, both of Old and in Latter Times, as all his Writings testify; he was a severe Reprover of publick Vices, a strict Enquirer into these National Exorbinances which so much provoke Heaven, he was a Faithful Fore-warner, and Bold Denouncer of such Judgments which he saw were like to overtake an incorrigible people. And therefore I hope it will not give offence if I follow the steps of this worthy Person, and with a resembling zeal and courage, present to your view the Dreadful Signs and Tokens of God's Anger against this Nation, and impartially shew you what are the Direful Harbingers and Precursors of its final Ruine. I do not undertake with a peremptory Ballance to pronounce a *Mene Tekel* on the Land of our Nativity. I have no Commis-

## The Preface to the Reader.

from to intermeddle with the Fatal Periods of Kingdoms and Empires. The Date of them is not legible to us, but is known only to the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Neither is it my design at present to represent the Times worse (I mean as to Morality) than they are, nor to render the present Face of Affairs Black and Melancholy, and thereby to fright and discourage People, and to take them off from their business, nor to administer anything which may be pleasing to the Minds of Male-content, whose number is too great already. This is none of my purpose, but I will tell you sincerely what is, viz. to set before you (as far as I am able) the Critical Times of Gods dispensing Judgments to a Nation, that being Fore-warned you may prepare your selves to receive them, or (if the Divine Decree be not Absolute and Irreversible) you may prevent them. This is the unfeigned intention and design of the present undertaking: and I heartily implore the Divine Assistance, that it may prove successful, that we of this Nation may see the Hand of God stretched out against us, and tremble at it, and before the Sentence be gone forth, turn from our sins, and hinder the actual pouring out of his Vials upon us. In short, whatever shall be rendered to you in the ensuing Papers is wholly in discharge of the Office of a Watchman, who is obliged to give notice of approaching danger. And therefore I hope none will take exceptions either at me or what I write, since I act within the compass of my Calling, and do nothing but what my Function as well as my Conscience warrants me to do. Let it then be your Prayer, as it is mine, that God would vouchsafe to Crown with his Blessing this honest and well meant design.

THE

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# THE SIGNS and FORE-RUNNERS OF A Nation's, &c.

Jeremiah 18. 7, 8.

*At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation,  
and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to  
pull down, and to destroy it :*

*If that Nation against whom I have pronounced, turn  
from their evil, then I will repent of the evil that  
I thought to do unto them.*

**W**HEN the Apostles had put That Question to our Saviour, *Mat.*  
1. 6. *Wilt thou at this time again restore the Kingdom to Israel?*  
We read that He returned This answer, *v. 7. It is not for you  
to know the Times or the Seasons which the Father hath put in  
his own Power.* From which Reply of our Lord we are instructed that  
an Unseasonable and an Unlawful Curiosity is to be checked, and that an In-  
quisitive Searching and Diving into those future things which belong not  
to us, and which are wholly placed out of our reach, and on purpose put  
in God's own power, are altogether unbecoming a Christian. But, not-  
withstanding this, it is Folly and Sottishness to take no notice of those  
Signs and Symptoms of Calamity, which, although they are in God's own  
power, he is pleas'd to set before our Eyes, and with this very design, that  
we may be Warned by them, and learn to escape the Divine Vengeance by

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abandon-

abandoning our sins. God upbraideth his People *Israel* for not observing his Providence in this kind, *Jer. 8. 7. The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their coming: But my People know not the Judgment of the Lord.* And the Pharisees were taxed by Christ on the like account, namely, for their gross Dulness in over-looking the visible and manifest Tokens of the Divine Displeasure against them. He corrects their fond

Inquisitiveness about the *Weather*, (as \* one observes out of the Jewish Writers, that these men were very Curious in minding the face of the Heavens when they took a Journey) whereas at the same time they took no notice of That which

was more observable; they did not discern those plain and undoubted Signs of Ruine which were so visible amongst them; *Matth. 16. 2, 3. You (saith our Saviour to them) say, when it is Evening, it will be fair Weather, for the Sky is red: and in the Morning it will be foul Weather, for the Sky is red and lowering. O ye Hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the Sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the Times?* You are Weather-wise, it seems, and can make Prognostications of the Seasons which shall happen, from your observing the Sky and the Clouds. But why do you not make Remarks likewise of another nature? Why do you not lift up your Eyes, and behold those Black and Thick Clouds which hang over your heads, and will in a short time disburden themselves upon you in Storms and Tempests, in amazing Thunder and Lightning, which will prove destructive to you? Are you not sensible of the Turbulent Weather which hovers over you? Do you not perceive the Tempestuous Season which is near? Is not your Disease come to a Crisis? Are not the Symptoms of Death upon you? Is not your Fatal Harvest drawing nigh? Is not your Corn ripe for the Sickle? May not he that sitteth read the Terrible Sentence which is passing against you, and guess at the Time of its Execution? Do you not perceive the Destruction of your City and Temple approaching? If you do not, it is high time that you did: It is fit that you be Allarmed, and look about you, that you take notice of the Imminent Danger you lie under, and that you be apprehensive of the Remarkable Discoveries of God's Wrath and Indignation against you. For, be it known to you, that your General Corruption and Depravity, your Universal Defiance against God and his Laws, will find no other Recompence than Utter Ruine and Desolation: And let me tell you, it is your own fault if you do not espy at this time the manifest Tokens and Forerunners of it amongst you. It is no hard matter to Discover God's Purpose and Intention concerning the Overthrow of a Rebellious and Impenitent People. He speaks to the Inhabitants of a Nation, and they may, if they will, understand his Voice: Yea, they may by hearty Repentance and Turning to God avert his Judgments.

These two things then we have here before us.

I. That

1. That God signally *Speakes* and *Pronounceth* concerning the *plucking up* and *pulling down* of a Nation.

2. That when he doth so, if that Nation turn from their evil ways God will turn away his Wrath, and repent of the evil that he thought to do unto them.

First; God himself here informs us that there is an *Instant* wherein he will *speak* concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to *pluck up*, and to *pull down*, and to *destroy* it. This Great and Important thing he *Speaks* divers ways. I will not undertake to enumerate all of them, but will only chuse out These four to insist upon.

1. God speaks concerning the Destruction of a Nation by his *Prophets* and *Messengers*.

2. By his *Severe Dealings* with other Nations.

3. By *Lesser Judgments* as the forerunners of Greater and Heavier ones.

4. By *Strange Signs* and *Prodigies*.

1. God is wont to *Speak* concerning the Ruine and Downfall of a Nation by the mouths of his *Prophets* and *Ministers*, whom he stirreth up to denounce his Wrath, and to proclaim his Purposes of Vengeance against a Sinful Land. Thus God set *Jeremiah* over the Nations and over the Kingdoms, to *root out*, and to *pull down*, and to *destroy*, and to *throw down*, *Jer. 1. 10.* The Prophet is said to do this by reason of his Commission given him by God to denounce destruction to impenitent Nations. Accordingly God saith, *Hos. 6. 5.* I have bewed them by the Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my Mouth: which may be meant of Gods fore-telling and declaring his Judgments by the Prophets. And thus the two Witnesses that Propheied had power to *shut Heaven*, and had power over *Waters*, to turn them to *Blood*, and to *smite the Earth* with all *Plagues*, as often as they would, *Rev. 11. 6.* I conceive the meaning is this, that they were authorized to *Denounce* and *Proclaim* the dreadful Judgments which were due to obstinate sinners. And this hath been the constant usage and dispensation of Heaven in the former ages of the World. *Noah* was constituted Gods Harbinger to the first Generations of Men, before the final destruction of them by the Deluge. He was that

\* *Righteous Crier* (so I crave leave to render the Greek,) *ἀναγγεῖς* 2 Pet. 2. 5. that just and Godly Herald, who was sent to proclaim the Divine Vengeance to the Unrighteous and Ungodly World. *Moses* and *Aaron* denounced Judgments (as well as shew'd Miracles) before the overthrow of *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptian Armies*. There was a *Samuel* to thunder out *Saul's Fate*, and to warn *Eli* of the Destruction of his House. There was an *Elijah* to foretel *Abahs* bloody end, and a *Daniel* to let *Belshazzar* know that the *Medes* and *Persians* should deprive him of his Crown. And so was it with Nations as well as Persons: *Isaiab*, *Jeremiah*, and other inspired Prophets gave warning of the ensuing ruine

of the *Jews*: they freely and plainly acquainted *Israel* and *Judah* that they should be dispersed into a Foreign Nation, and be miserable captives in a strange Countrey. The Prophet *Jonah*, though backward and unwilling, was dispatched by the Almighty to that great City *Nineveh*, to let them know the Date of their Ruine, if they prevented it not by speedy Repentance. But besides these more Sacred and Solemn warnings which we find Registred in the Infalible Volume of Truth, there have been *Other* Notable Denunciations of God's Displeasure to a Nation, from the Mouths of such Persons whom he hath been pleased to raise up for that purpose. A very Observable and Singular Instance

\* *Josephus de bello Judaico*. l. 7. c. 12.

of this kind is that which is related by a \* Credible Person, who, in his History of the *Jewish Wars*, tells us, That one *Jesai*, or *Josuah*, a poor silly Country man, four years before the defection of the *Jews* from the *Romans*, and before the War was so much as Begun, in the time of *Jerusalem's* greatest Peace and Plenty, at the Feast of Tabernacles, was first heard to Cry out against the City, with a most hideous and doleful voice, and after that he travelled day and night through all the Streets, Crying aloud, *Woe, Woe to Jerusalem*. And so Eager and Concerned was this Prophetick Peasant in this his employment, that no Threats or Stripes which he suffered, could divert him from it, but for Seven years together, and upward, even until the Siege, he perpetually repeated, with a Dismal Note, his Denunciations of *Woe* to the City, Temple and People.

This Relation is from the Pen of one who was a *Jew* by Birth and Nation, and therefore it is probable he would give the Truest Account he could of the Affairs of those People; besides that, he had more than ordinary opportunities of acquainting himself with all the passages both preceding and accompanying the War between the *Jews* and *Romans*. And this is he who makes this Solemn Protestation at the beginning and end of his Book, that the Writing of Truth was the onely scope he had in that and all other his Writings. I might leave this Remark by the by on the foregoing Narrative, That they who Scoffed at *JESUS*, the Son of God, and at last Crucified him, were warned by a Poor ordinary Man of that Name, concerning their Final Destruction, but it was in vain, and to no purpose.

But, to come down to *Our Selves*, and our *Late* and *Present State*, We have not been destitute of Prophetick Warnings. *England* cannot say, She hath been without her *Prophets*. *Latimer*, that Man of God, and *Other Martyrs* in the *Marian* days (as you may Read in Mr. *Fox's* Martyrology.) threatened the Ruin of this Island, considering its shameful Ingratitude, after the Receiving so many Favours from Heaven, and foreseeing

seeing or fearing its Apostacy to Superstition and Idolatry. Did not those Famous Lights of our Country, Bishop *Andrews*, Archbishop *Abbot*, Bishop *King*, Mr. *Mede*, and Dr. *Hacket* fore-tell the downfall of the Church of *England*? which some of us saw verified, though it pleased God to restore it again. Did not the Judicious Mr. *Hooker*, in the Preface to his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, foretel our Late Troubles Forty years before they came to pass? Did not Dr. *Jackson*, Mr. *Ferrar*, Mr. *Edwards*, and others, speak Prophetically of the Events and Transactions which we have since seen, inasmuch that we may rightly think, they Beheld those things at a distance? Did not that Excellent Servant of God Archbishop *Usher* Predict those Changes and Miseries which have since befallen *England* and *Ireland*? It is acknowledged by all Men that have their eyes open, that there hath been, and still is, a Design to bring us under the *Roman-Yoke* and Tyranny, which heretofore prevailed in these Kingdoms; the effect of which can be no other than the Slavery both of our Souls and Bodies.

Now as to our Great and Unexpressible Danger, in relation to This, we have not wanted some *Prophetick* hints. To pass by that Antient Prophecie which hath been found amongst Mr. *Selden's* Manuscripts, in which it is foretold, That Popery should decay in *England* about the year of our Lord 1500. (which we know was accomplished,) and that it should be Restored about the year 1700 (which is not far distant from us;) To pass by *This*, I say, as not knowing what Authority it is built upon, I will produce the Prophetick Suggestions of two Eminent Worthies of our Church, and so put a period to this First Head of our Discourse. I have named one of these persons already, I mean, the Learned, Pious, and every ways Accomplished Primate of *Armagh*. Who hath not heard of the Extraordinary Motions and Impulses of his Spirit, in reference to our Late Times?

Have not \* Those who have given the World a \* Dr. *Bernard*, and faithful Account of that Holy Man's Life; assured others.

us, That he had frequent and constant Impressions on his Mind (and such as could not be removed all his days) that the time was near at hand which should involve the Protestant Churches in unspeakable Calamities, and that this Land, in a special manner, should feel the Cruelty of the Papists. And This, and much more to this effect, he was wont to repeat to his Friends, with a wonderfully concerned Passion, and his words were usually accompanied with abundant Tears. There is another Admirable Person, viz. Mr. *George Herbert*, that Divine Poet, and I wish there be no reason to add, that Inspired Prophet, whose Lofly Raptures in the Last of his Poems, Entituled, *The Church Militant*; sadly intimate to us (what we justly have deserved) That Popery shall make its Return to us again, and that the Gospel shall leave *England*, and go visit the *Americans*.

Religion



*Religion stands on Tip-toe in our Land,  
Ready to pass to the American Strand,  
When height of Malice, and prodigious Lusts,  
Impudent Sinning, &c.*

Who sees not, that many Passages in this Poem nearly concern us at present? Is it not evident, that we have been filling up the measure of our sins? Who can deny, that the most *Prodigious and Impudent Lusts* are tolerated amongst us? Who knows not, that *Seine and Tiber* have been mixed with our *Thames*? Is it not manifest, that we greedily take in and embrace the *Vices of Foreigners*, and therefore may justly expect (as a most Fitting Reward for us) to be brought under the Dominion of Strangers, to live in the condition of Slaves, and to have the Kingdom of God wholly taken from us, and given to a Nation which will bring forth the fruits thereof?

If any shall say, That the Suggestions of these Persons whom I have produced were not immediately from God, and cannot be filed *Prophecies*, for this way of Revelation is ceas'd long ago: I Answer, That they who suggest this, say more than they can prove; For, as it was *Abraham, the Friend of God*, that was acquainted with God's purpose of destroying *Sodom and Gomorrah*; and it was the *Beloved Disciple John* that had the Revelation of the Greatest Mysteries concerning the Future State of Christ's Church in all Ages: So it may be believed that there are still some *Beloved Servants of God* who have Discoveries of Secrets from him, upon some Great Occasions especially. In this number I may reckon the Worthy Persons before mentioned, besides several others in Foreign Countreys, as *John Hus of Bohemia, Abbas Joachim in the Isle of Sicily, Savonarolo in Italy, Luther and Melancthon in Germany, John Knox, and George Wishard in Scotland*. The respective Histories which speak of these Persons, assure us, that they had a *Prophetick Spirit*, and that they were inform'd by God concerning several future events by Secret Inspiration. And there are others whom I could name, and whom I have known, who have had such a Divining Spirit as to foretel what afterwards came to pass. And although the People of *England* are said to be very much inclined to hearken to *Prophecies*; and particularly it is observed by *Comines*, as a Fault in the English, that they depend much upon *Prophecies and Presages*, and are wont to Interpret them according to their own conceits, (which folly, it seems, they inherit

from their Ancestours, the *Antient Britains*, who, as

\* *Cambd. Britan.*

\* One assures us, were People of great Credulity, and gave ear to every Idle Prophecie, and presently from a Superstitious Hope believed them) yet this ought to be no impediment to our belief, that there are some real Prophecies at this day, That the Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and that he sometimes Reveals to his Servants what he will do in the World. Or, if you are loth to call this a *Prophetick Spirit*, yet if you will grant that of *Philo*

to be true, \* *The Mind of Man is given to Presage, especially in a time of Trouble and Calamity*; or if that be Authentick which *Clement Alexandrinus* avers, † *A Disciple of wisdom hath a fore knowledge of Signs and Prodigies, and of the Events of Seasons and Times*, which he borrowed from *Wisd. 8. 8.* Then it is most certainly true, that the Masters of *Wisdom*, those who are set apart by God for the

\* Μαθηματισμοῦ ἢ ἐνδοξασίας, καὶ μακροῦ τοῦ ἐν καταστροφῇ. Phil. in Flac

† Σμύνα καὶ τέρατα προνοώσκει, καὶ συνέστασι καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ χρόνῳ ὁ τοῦ σοφίας μαθητής. Strom. 6.

Instructing of the World, and for the Fore-warning of Men concerning their future danger, are sometimes indued with an extraordinary Foresight: Those whom Providence hath placed on the *Watch-towers*, are blessed with a Clearer Prospect than Private Christians, who are seated below. These are the Persons whom he stirs up to denounce future Judgments to an Impenitent People. And these are all to be esteemed as *True Prophets*, although we have not actually felt some of those things which they threatned the Inhabitants of this Nation with. What though Popery be not returned into these Realms? Yet we may remember (with Trembling and Rejoicing together) how near it was to us; and it must be ascribed wholly to the Singular and Unexpected Providence of God that it approach'd no nearer: It is owing to the Almighty and All-wise Conduct of Heaven, that it was Prevented and Averted. But if we look upon Humane Causes, and the Natural Tendency of Things, we must acknowledge that they were in readiness for the readmission of the Roman Religion among us; and consequently our Ruin and Destruction were approaching. Those Persons therefore might, even as Considering and Understanding Men, foresee what they so often denounced. And the impartial view of those sins, and the nature of them, which the People of this Land were daily indulging themselves in, could not but yield them matter of Loud Complaint, and of severe Threatnings against such Offenders.

Hence how many in This Age have Cried aloud, and spared not, and have lift up their Voice like a Trumpet, and have shewed this People their Transgression, and the House of England their Sin; Though such a Sight hath been very Unacceptable to them? Have not all those Faithful Ministers in the Land, who have been intrusted with the Flock of Christ, freely and impartially, for a long time, set before Imboldned Sinners the Folly of their ways, and warned them of the Exceeding Danger they were in, not onely as to themselves, but as to the whole Community, on which they were bringing a Sudden and General Destruction? Thus God speaks concerning a Nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy, viz. By the Ministry of his Word, by his Prophets and Ambassadors; and particularly he speaks to you at this time, by one of the meanest and unwor-

unworthiest of his Messengers, who is authorized to utter such Words as these, our Sins are great and Crying, our Dissentions and Divisions are many, and every day increasing. Both of them make us obnoxious to the Divine Displeasure: and if we Repent not of the former, and take care to heal the latter, we shall certainly bring down Ruine upon our Selves and our Posterity.

II. God speaks concerning the final Desolation of a People, *by his Judgments and severe Dealings with other Nations, or with the same Nation in former times.* It is an undeniable Truth, and may be made clear to Inquisitive and Judicious Minds, that many of the Divine Threatnings and Transactions of Providence of Old, look and reach even unto Us upon whom the ends of the World are come. We have our Destruction plainly Intimated, and set forth before us, by the Increpations and Reproofs, the Menaces and Threatnings of the Prophets of the Old Testament. If we look into those Sacred Scriptures, and view the several Denunciations of Judgments there, we must needs think our selves concerned. For the Holy Writings are Large and Comprehensive, and like the Divine Commandments *exceeding Broad.* I might shew, that the Sacred Prophecies recorded in the Infalible Canon of the Bible, have an aspect not only to things which were at that time transacted, but to those Affairs also, which are of the like Nature in other Ages. I could make it appear that many of those Prophecies which did *primarily* relate to things which are long since past, do likewise refer to matters now in being, and to other things which are not yet accomplished. It is the Nature of those Antient Prophecies to look directly at one thing, but obliquely at some other. There is a Complication of Predictions in the same place of Scripture: one great Revelation is pregnant with others. The Scripture is so full, that it sometimes comprehends several Persons, if not Nations, under one Name. The *Jews* overthrow not only by *Antiochus*, but by *Titus Vespasian* (which was three hundred years after) was foretold at once by *Daniel*. The same Prophecie and the very same Words Predict the one and the other, as is plain from Christs Words in *Mat. 24. 15.* *When ye shall see the Abomination of Desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the Holy place.* It signifies therefore first *Antiochus* his setting up the Image of *Jupiter* in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, or his Armies entering into that Temple, and defiling it (of which *Josephus* gives us an account: ) and then likewise it signifies *Titus Vespasian*s prophaning that Holy Place, and afterwards destroying it, for all agree, that our Saviour speaks in that place of the final Destruction of *Jerusalem*: And He tells us, that the Prophet *Daniel* spoke of it in those words, and therefore he adjoyneth in that forementioned verse, *Who so readeth, let him understand,* intimating thereby that there is a secret meaning in the Prophets Words, and that there is a more than Ordinary Understanding

ding required to comprehend the sense of what he saith. These Prophecick sayings are wonderfully Large and Extensive, and wrap up different meanings in few words.

And if the *Prophecies* and *Menaces*, which primarily belong to the *Jews* or other Nations, do in a secondary way relate to the People of future Ages, and consequently do concern Us of this present Generation, then certainly the *Actual Inflicting of Punishments and Judgment* recorded in Sacred Writ appertain to the present Times. *All these things*, saith the Apostle, speaking of Gods Judgments on the Jewish Nation, *Happened unto them for \* Examples,* \* Τύποι, 1 Cor. 10. 11. The Evils and Punishments which were inflicted on that People, were *Types* (as the Greek word is properly to be rendred,) they were fit *Representations* of what we shall suffer, if we be guilty in the same manner that they were. It was intended, that we should be Copies of those Originals. *What befell the Fathers, was to be a Sign to their Sons*, as the *Jews* Proverbially speak. When we see our Sins parallel with theirs, we may know what is coming on us by the Judgments which overtook them. When we are Conscious to ourselves, that we are guilty of those very Sins, which the Scripture acquaints us brought down Evils and Plagues upon other Nations; we cannot but conclude that our Ruine is described in the Book of God, and that our Destruction is foretold by the ancient Prophets, *Ezek. 23. 31. Thou hast walked in the way of thy Sister*, saith God to *Jerusalem*, *therefore will I give her Cup into thy hand*: If thou imitatest another People in thy Sins, thou maist expect to do so in their Plagues. *Samaria* had felt the Divine Wrath and Vengeance: And *Jerusalem* must take warning by her: The Calamities which the one had experienced, were too plain a Presage of the dismal fate of the other. The Word of the Lord by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, speaking of the fearful Fall and Destruction of *Egypt*, is very Remarkable, Chap. 32. 9, 10. *I will vex the Hearts of many People, when I shall bring thy Destruction among the Nations into the Countries, which thou hast not known. Yea, I will make many People amazed at thee, and their Kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them, and they shall tremble every moment, every man for his own Life, in the day of thy Fall.* When we see Gods scourge on others, we have good reason to think that the Lashes will even reach us at last.

To this purpose, observe, how God speaks to *Jerusalem* by the Prophet *Zephaniah*, *I have Cut off the Nations: Their Towers are Desolate, I made their Streets waste. I said, Surely thou wilt fear, thou wilt receive Instruction*, Chap. 3. 6, 7. God speaks to one Nation by the Calamities he sends on another. Is not this Our Case? Are there not many Examples of Gods Severity before our Eyes? Have not Kingdoms and Churches, Nations and Cities been brought to utter Deso-

lation for their Contempt of Gods Laws, and the Prophaneness of their Lives and manners? Do not the Annals of all Ages serve to assist our belief of this Truth? *Jerusalem grievously sinned, and therefore she was removed.* The Greatest and most Celebrated Monarchies (as the *Assyrian*, and others,) and the most flourishing Churches (as those noted ones of *Asia*) lie buried in their own Ashes because of their crying Sins. Those Eastern Churches, which were planted by the Doctrine of the Holy Apostles, and water'd with their Blood are now the Habitation of the Disciples of that vile Impostor Mahomet. I might (if I would enlarge on this Head) direct your Eyes to the Calamities and Miseries, which other Countries nearer to us have laboured under: But both the Examples which are remote, and those that are near at hand ought to be made use of to this one design, namely to imprint it effectually on our Minds, that Punishments on others speak Ruine to our selves. I will close this part of my Discourse with a short Reflection on the *Ancient Britains*, who first inhabited this Nation. We may be warn'd of Gods Vengeance by the Example of those our *Ancestors*, who deservedly were harass'd and Plagued for their Heinous Miscarriages.

\* *De excid. & Conquest. Britan. Hi flourish'd about A. D. 530.*

\* *Gildas*, a British Monk, who purchased the Names of the *Wise*, for his Grave and Sober way of Writing, and Flourish'd a little after the *Saxons* first coming hither, hath left a brief, but full Account of the Sins and Calamities of his Countrymen. This British *Jeremy* (for so I may stile him) with Tears recounts and laments their *Outragious Vices*, as the cause of all their Distresses and Miseries, of all their Unhappy Changes and Revolutions. This Instance, as more nearly concerning us, ought to be considered and laid to Heart by us in a signal manner, yet so as we forget not to cast our Eyes on other Examples, which we meet with in History of those Kingdoms and Common-wealths, which have thrown off Justice and Probity, Faith and Honesty, and have indulged themselves in the greatest Enormities, and have soon after come to Ruine. So that from what hath befallen other Nations, we may rationally judge of the future Revolution and Fate of our own.

III. *God speaks*, and that very plainly, concerning the overthrow of a Land by the several lesser Judgments, which he first sends among them. When God is angry with a People, he discovers it by his Threatnings (of which I said something under the first Head,) but after he hath threatned, he begins to strike: After he hath done chiding, and that proves not effectual, he proceeds to Blows. And these, though they be not of the greatest size, are cer-  
tain



tain Signs and Evidences of Gods anger, and they let us understand that unless we Repent, we shall feel the utmost of his Fury and Indignation. Though the Syrians be before, and the Philistins behind, and they both devour Israel with open Mouth, yet for all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still, Isa. 9. 12. And after the rehearsal of Diverse Judgments this is again repeated in the same place, His anger is not turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still: As much as to say, lesser Evils do but make way for greater and more astonishing ones. This is Gods known Method in the World, of Punishing Sinners. This is evidenced in those Plagues which were inflicted on Pharaoh, and the People of Egypt: The Judgments which God sent upon them rose higher, and higher till the last was the severest of all. So the Author of the Book of Wisdom observes concerning the Canaanites, Wisd. 12. 8, 10. That God did not destroy them all at once, but executed his Judgments on them by little and little. Whereupon he adds, v. 26. They that would not be reformed by that Correction wherein he as it were dalled with them, shall feel a Judgment worthy of God. And this is clear in Gods proceedings against the Jewish Nation; who you will find were gradually punished: When they continued a stiff-necked and incorrigible People, and continually did that which provoked the Divine Majesty, the Chaldeans came, and sack'd and burnt Jerusalem, and carried the inhabitants away Captive into a strange Country. And though the Slavery in Egypt was hard, yet this Captivity in Babylon, was (as \* the Jews observe) more hard and intolerable. And afterwards, when by Gods Infinite Goodness they were restored to their own Country, and the Hearts of Pagan Princes were inclined to shew favour to them, yet (notwithstanding this miraculous Mercy) they sinned against their Deliverer, and fell into their former Idolatries, and in sundry manners perverted and corrupted their ways; and adding at last to all their wickednesses the crucifying of the Lord of Life and Glory, their Sins being now come to the height, the extremity of Gods Wrath was declared against them, and the Roman Armies came and besieged them, and after they had broken in upon them, miserably treated those wicked Cairiffs, exposing all either to Fire or Sword, except those who were made Captives, to be the Living Remains and Lasting Trophies of their Cruelly, the race of whom are Fugitives and Vagabonds on the Earth to this day, and their Name as well as Nation is almost extinct in the World. Thus one Judgment, and that a greater, succeeded another: The Jews suffer'd under the Egyptians, and among the Chaldeans; and I might have added that they were plagued by the Syrian Armies: but at last came Titus, who out-did Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Antiochus. And this was but what the

\* Quammodum  
lapis durior est la-  
te, sic Babylonica  
servitudo durior fuit  
Egypti. Prov. Juh

great *Jehovah* had told them they might expect at his hands; viz. *That if they would not hearken to him, and be reformed, but would walk contrary to him, he would punish them yet seven times more for their Sins, Lev. 26. 18, &c.* Which is repeated no less than four times, to intimate the certainty of it. This is the Process of the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, this is the usual course of the Divine Justice. The Throne of Judicature is ascended by several Steps and Degrees: There is a certain Climax in Gods Judgments. God hath his Milder, and he hath also his Severer Punishments, his Gentler and Hisseuer Indictions; but the former are wont to prepare the way for the latter. The Heavenly Judge is not rigorous with Malefactors for the first Crime: But if they go on in their evil Practices, the extremity of the Law is executed upon them, and they feel the utmost severity of the incensed Majesty. May not *We* of this Nation think our selves, even on this account, fitted to Destruction, and ready for the Extremity of Gods Wrath? We have experienced many and various Calamities: And may not we fear that they are the Harbingers of utter Destruction? The Divine Revenge begins low, and strikes more sparingly and gently, till at last it fetches a greater compass, and takes its strokes with more force, and lays on heavier blows. We have in many Instances felt the anger of Heaven; but we are to remember that as we have sinned variously, so it is just that we be Punished after that sort. As the measure of our Iniquities fills, so doth that of Gods Wrath in a proportionable manner. Reflecting upon our former and present Calamities, we may say as our Saviour in the like Case, *Matth. 24. 6. All these things are come to pass, but the end is not yet.* It may be, *ver. 8. All these things are the Beginning of Sorrows.*

The Distresses and Evils which have already happened to us, have not produced any Amendment in us, and therefore we may justly fear that they will be back'd with more Direful Consequences. God hath been to England as a *Moth*, as the

\* *Hos. 5. 12.* Prophet \* *Hosea* expresseth it: He hath been wasting us with Lingring Afflictions. Doth it not remain that he be unto us as a *Lion* (as it follows in the † same place) that he tear us in pieces, and make a full end of us?

† *V. 14.* The *Moth* makes way for the *Lion*, that is, some Lesser and Milder Judgments, which silently and gradually eat out the heart and strength of a People, prepare them for a more Fatal and Devouring Judgment. The *Moth*, which consumeth one Thread now, and anon another, fits the Garment to be rent in pieces the easier. God, before he Utterly Ruines a Land, wastes them by piece-meals, weakens and enfeebles them by degrees. By Precursory Judgments he makes them unable to withstand a Final Devastation, to frustrate some Devilish Conspiracy, to resist some Potent

\* *Isa. 3. 1.* Enemy, or the like. It may be observed that \* *the Lord* takes away from a People whom he destines to Destruction.

Sion (as he did from Jerusalem, and from Judah) the *Ray* and  
 the *Staff*, the whole *Ray* of *Bread*, and the whole *Ray* of *Water*; i. e. the  
 Necessary Provisions of Man's Life. Though, blessed be God, these  
 Supports are not yet taken from us, yet we have reason to be afraid  
 that they will be removed; and that God will blast the Fruits of  
 the Earth, and bring a Famine upon us in the Rear of all those No-  
 table Judgments, that Terrible Army which hath quartered amongst  
 us. Other *Stays* of a Land (as you read) are the *Prudent*, and *Ancient*, the *Judges*, and Experienced *Coun-  
 cillors*, men of sincerity and faithfulness, of skill and abili-  
 ty to manage Publick Affairs for the best; as also the *Mighty  
 Man*, and the *Man of War*, Valiant Leaders and Souldiers: These  
 are the *Stay* and *Staff* of a Kingdom, and when God designs the  
 Ruine of a People, he suffers these to fail. The *Mighty Man*, and  
*Man of War*, and the *Captain of Fifty* become Deserters: The  
*Prudent* and *Ancient* withdraw, and hide those Heads which would  
 be useful in a Perillous Time: The *Honourable Man* is vilified;  
 and discharg'd from his High Station, the *Judge* hath his *Quierus*,  
 the *Concellor* is dismiss'd, the *Eloquent Orator* is struck dumb,  
 and all his Excellent Topicks of Discourse dwindle into a faint  
*Aposiopesis*. Lastly, The *Cunning Artificers* and *Industrious Trades-  
 men*, the great *Stay* and *Staff* of a City or Nation, are shattered and  
 broken. This was the True Pourtraiture of Jerusalem, as the  
 Prophet represented it. When These things were Visible, the  
 Final Destruction of That People was so too, which makes the  
 Prophet expressly and peremptorily add, \* *Jerusalem is  
 ruined, and Judah is fallen*. This is the Short, but Sad \* Verse 8,  
 Epitaph which the Man of God prepares to write  
 over those two formerly Glorious, but now Sinking and Expiring  
 Kingdoms. They had lain a long time in a Sick and Weak con-  
 dition, and now the Fatal Four is come, and the Prophet loudly  
 proclaims their Utter Ruine. The *Morb* had weaken'd and worn  
 them a considerable time; and now at last the *Lion* seizeth upon  
 them, and they are unavoidably torn asunder, and destroyed. If  
 we had that spiritual sagacity which some of God's Servants are  
 endued with, we might soon read our Future Miseries in those  
 Evils which have been our Allotment already. For 'tis certain,  
 (though not observed by vulgar Eyes) that there are some Acci-  
 dents that befall us, which point to Greater Mischiefs that are to  
 ensue. This Truth which is so much hidden from common apprehen-  
 sions, was plainly Preached by our Lord upon the occasion of  
 the Unusual Massacre of the *Galileans*, and the Disaster of those  
 Inhabitants of Jerusalem, on whom the Tower in *Siloam*  
 fell and slew them. \* *Except ye repent, saith he, ye shall  
 All likewise perish*. As if he had said, these Particular \* Luke 13: 5.  
 and:

and Single Accidents, are Prefages of a General Destruction. The Galileans Blood which Pilate shed, doth portend an Universal Sacrifice of the whole Nation of the Jews: The Fall of the Tower of Siloam, fore-signifies the Demolishing of the Temple, and of all the stately Structures in Jerusalem. These (saith a \* Dr. Jackson " Pious and Pathetical Writer) were the first Drops of Gods Displeasure against that Nation, but these Drops without Repentance will grow into a Current, and that Current into a River, and the River will swell into a Flood, and that Flood into an Ocean of publick Woe and Tragick Miseries. We of this Nation have felt many Judgments, but these are nothing to what we may expect; for lesser evils are fore-warnings of Greater to follow: past calamities are signs of more dreadful ones to come. Gods Judgments on a Nation are least at first, but successively worse and worse: they are not unlike that Cloud which *Elijah* saw, no bigger than a Mans Hand at the first view, but they spread themselves by degrees, and cover the whole Heaven. Say that we are freed from some great Dangers which we lay under (and blessed be God that by the late Happy Revolution we are freed from them:) we are not thereupon to think our selves secure, and as it were privileged from those Great Plagues which remain for the ungodly. God hath a whole Magazine, an inexhaustible Store-house of Weapons of Vengeance: and when we think they are all spent, he is whetting them and making them ready, or perhaps he is preparing more Destructive ones. The late harmful motion of the Earth may be succeeded by a furious and violent concussion, such as may prove fatal to the whole Nation. Divine Justice, it may be, is setting out in some New and Unheard of ways of severity, in some untrodden Paths of Vengeance. Or perhaps, the Judgments which we experienced heretofore, the Intestine Wars, the Civil Distractions and Commotions, the Pestilence, the Fire, the Bloody Conspiracies and Attempts of our Implacable Enemies, and all their Curled Outrages and Execrable Villanies may be repeated. And though the same Cup may be put into our Hands, yet we may be forced to Drink Deeper of it, and the very Dreggs of Gods Wrath may be poured into it.

IV. God sometimes speaks, and that aloud, concerning a Nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it, by Strange Signs and Prodiges which he causeth to appear. These the Hebrews call *Osoth* and *Mophethim*; the Greeks *μεγαλα, μυστα*; the Latins *Portenta, O-sienta, Prodigia*. These exceed the ordinary course of things, and are above the usual Laws and Power of Nature. And being such, that is, extraordinary as to their production, they are so likewise as to their Ends: they were designed to Terrifie and Admonish Mankind, to be

Prognosticks of approaching evil, to be Messengers and Fore-runners of heavy Plagues and Miseries; whereas things that are ordinary and natural; which are produced by the constant and settled Laws of Nature are not Ominous, because there is no evil lurking in Nature. I reckon in the number of *Prodigies*, the sudden and unaccountable changes which are sometimes observ'd in the Air and other Elements, the strange and amazing Tempests, Storms, and Thunders, with the affrighting circumstances that accompany them: Earthquakes, whether they be the lesser and gentler Tremblings of the Earth, or whether they be the more fierce and vehement Shocks of it, whereby Houses and Inhabitants and all things on the place are violently removed and destroyed: Great and Horrible Eruptions of Fire: Excessive Inundations of Water (the outrageous Sallies of either of those Masterless Elements being very Boading and Portentous: ) Alterations in the Heavens, strange Appearances of the Sun and Moon: Comets, or, as they vulgarly are called, Blazing Stars.

These happening besides the common and wonted order of Nature are not only Calamities themselves, but are the undoubted Emblems and Ensigns of other approaching Calamities to a Nation: and they are set in the fair and spacious Theatre of Heaven as the fittest place to represent those Divine shews to the view of all. The *Apparitions* likewise in the Inferior Regions of the Heavens are justly reckoned as Prodigious and Portentous: the Delineations and Effigies of Persons and Things in the Clouds were ever presumed to preface some strange events. Especially the Images of Armed Men joined in Battle, and Fighting in the Skies have been by the wisest observers of things that happen accounted to be Significant and Ominous. And indeed the whole Doctrine of *Prodigies* hath been vouched and maintain'd by the long and uninterrupted Aprobation of the wisest Historians, and all other prudent enquirers into the Works of Providence. The Annals of all Times testify that when God purporeth to punish a Kingdom or City, he usually fore-signifieth it by *Prodigies* of one quality or other. I doubt not but this hath been Gods method from the Beginning of the World. I question not but the General Flood which wash'd away the first great and incorrigible sinners, was foretold to the people of that Age by some remarkable signs, though *Moses*, who omits many other things for brevity sake, hath not recorded them. Some of these Portentous accidents shall preface the End of the World, as is implied in the four and twentieth chapter of St. *Matthew*, for those things which are said there to be fore-runners of the Destruction of *Jerusalem* are to be understood likewise as Indications of the approaching Consummation of all things. But there are express instances in Sacred Writ: we read that the Egyptian Plagues, which were no other than *Prodigies*, were the fore-runners of the fatal end of *Pharaoh* and his mighty Host.



The same Sacred History assures us that the dispensation of the Jews was renowned for many Terrible Instances of *Prodigious Apparitions*. That Grave Author who Wrote the Books of the *Maccabees* relates the wonderful Signs which were seen in *Jerusalem*, before the Sacking of it by *Antiochus's Army*: *That* (saith he) *it happened that*

*a Mac. 5. 1, 3.*

*through all the City for the space almost of forty days, there were seen Hosts men running in the Air in Cloth of Gold, and Armed with Lances like a Band of Soldiers: and Troops of Horsemen in Array, Encountering and Running out against another, with Shouting of Shields, and Multitude of Pike, and drawing of Swords, and casting of Darts, and glittering of Golden Ornaments, and Harness of all sorts. These were the Visible Signs from Heaven which prefiged the coming of that Execrable and Bloody Tyrant to Jerusalem. This Dreadful and Astonishing Apparition was Remarkable for its continuance, for it lasted above a month together: besides it was a Spectacle to entertain all Beholders that would look up and see it. But it was most Notable and Significant in regard of the Effects and Events which followed it, viz. the horrible Persecutions which the Inhabitants of that place*

*suffer'd, and the Bloody Slaughters which they underwent under Antiochus: 13, 14 v. There was (as that Writer tells us) killing of Young and Old, making away of Men, Women and Children, slaying of Virgins and Infants. And there were despoiled within the space of three whole Days fourscort thousand, whereas forty thousand were slain in the Conflict, and prisoner sold than slain. And to all this was added the spoiling of the Temple, and the Prophaning of it no less than three years and a half. But the most remarkable Prodigies were those which Christ himself foretold should be the direful presages of Jerusalem's overthrow, its last and final overthrow by Titus, in the second year of his Father Vespasian's Reign, and in the thirty eighth year after Christ's Passion. Great Earth quakes, saith he, shall be*

*in divers places, and Famines, and Pestilences, and fearful Signs and great*

*Signs shall there be from Heaven. Luk. 21. 11.*

He that will give himself time to consult that Famous History of *Josaphus*, which treats on purpose of the *Jewish War*, may be soon convinced of the Truth and Reality of what our Saviour here saith, and abundantly satisfy himself that it was fully accomplished. There never were such *Famines and Pestilences* as happened at that Time, viz. at the Siege of *Jerusalem*. Armies and Charions, and Glistering Troops were observed in the Clouds, and other Strange and Ominous Apparitions were beheld in the Skie before the Taking and Burning of that Renowned City. A Fiery Sword, or a Blazing Star in the shape of a Sword, hung over that Place, and was Gaz'd on by all its Inhabitants. This Comet appeared no less than a Year together, Hovering over the Temple, and other Parts of *Jerusalem*, as a Certain Hieroglyphick and Symbol of the Desolation which was near at hand. They who would not attend to the Star over *Bethlehem*, had now a more Astonishing one, which denounced the Fate of *Jerusalem*. That is a Wonderful Passage which we find related by that Historian, that the heavy Gates of the Temple were seen to fly open when there was nobody near to forward their Motion. And this Opening of the Temple Gates of their own accord, is taken notice of in the *Talmud* as a Prodigious thing that happened to the Jews in those days; and as a Mark (among other things) of the Divine Anger. But the Terrible Noises and Voices, and the Fearful Signs which appeared were the most notable of all. A little before the approach of *Jerusalem's* Final Ruin, one day at the Feast of Pentecost, as the High Priest entered into the Temple to offer the usual Sacrifices, there was heard a Sudden Noise, and This Voice following it, *Let us Depart Hence*. Which was a Warning, and an Alarm from Heaven of the Misery which that City underwent as soon as God's Servants had quit the place. On the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at Nine a Clock at Night, the Temple was seen of a sudden to be all Incompassed with a Clear Light, as if it were Broadday. If you would farther satisfy your selves, you may peruse the Twelfth Chapter of the Seventh Book of the forementioned History, which particularly and purposely treats of the Dismal Signs which then appeared: and there also you will see what that Learned Man's Judgment is concerning *Prodigies*. He cannot but be lookt upon as a Credible Author, nor onely for the Reasons before suggested, but because this Person Accompanied Titus to the Siege of *Jerusalem*, and consequently was able to Behold the things which then happened, and to acquaint himself also with the Passages which had gone before.

## by the late Terrible Earthquakes.

67

But this withal is very considerable, that what this Jewish Historian relates concerning this matter, is seconded and confirmed by that Sober Roman Writer Cornelius Tacitus, who lived also in the time of Jerusalem's Destruction. He relates the same Prodigious which Josephus doth, but being ignorant of the true God, and an Enemy both to Jews and Christians, he represents them in a rude manner. He expressly tells us, That \* Troops of Men appeared in the Skie, all in bright Armour, and with the sudden light which fluked from the Clouds, the Temple shone: The great and massy Gates of this Holy place flew open of their own accord: And unto Sighs were added unusual Noises; a Voice Spoke to this purpose, That the Gods were departing: And this loud Voice, far greater than that of Man, was accompanied with a Noise as if were of a great many persons rushing out, and leaving the place. Would

\* Regibus adversa  
vise per celum concunere  
acies, rutilantia aram,  
& subito nubium igne collu-  
cere templum. Expellit  
repente delubra, totosq;  
audita major humant vos  
excedere Deos, (simul)  
motus ingens excedenti-  
um. Hist. lib. 5.

you have a particular of the strange Events, and deplorable Calamities which were prefixed by these Signs and Apparitions? Take it in short thus, (and if you have a desire to see the tragical account at large, consult Josephus, especially his four last Books, which cannot be read without a mixture of Pity and Horror) during the Siege that Year, and at the taking of Jerusalem even Eleven hundred thousand perished by Fire, Sword, Famine, Pestilence, and Civil Discord. Ninety seven thousand were reserved for Captives, for so many were taken prisoners at that time by the Roman Armies, on the occasion of extraordinary Multitudes of Jews meeting together to celebrate the Passover, which was the very time at which they put our Saviour to Death. An innumerable Company of that miserable Nation, which sold Christ for Thirty pieces of Silver, were exposed to sale at a far cheaper rate: For (as this Author affirms) the Market ran so low, that twenty Jews were sold for a Penny. The whole City and Temple were utterly demolished to the Ground. And this was done by him who was Ruled the Dawning and Delight of Mankind, as if the Jews were not of Hamane race; Tho' (as the same Author saith) the sight of Jerusalem's Ruines, were so Lamentable and Dismal, that it extorted Tears from that Warlike Person who was the cause of them. But to proceed in the things which I undertook, that all Sober and Intelligent Writers acknowledge there are certain Prodigious which are fore-runners of the Evil and Calamities which are to ensue. An Antient Father tells us, That before the Civil Wars of the Romans, those Books and Cattle generally run Wild, even those that were exceeding tame before. A Presage (saith he) of their Mankind's cruelties and Inhumanity. A known Ecclesiastical Historian, speaking of the Earthquake which happened in Bithynia, and the neighbouring Countries, in the Days of Valerian and Gallus, makes this Remark, That

\* *Ταυτοσημασία* 3 *αβαν*  
*ω τα* *αυτοσημασία* 3 *αβ*  
*ελλασημασία* 3 *αβ*. So  
 erat. Eccles. Hist. l. 2.  
 c. 20.

\* *Ταυτοσημασία* 3 *αβαν*  
*ω τα* *αυτοσημασία* 3 *αβ*  
*ελλασημασία* 3 *αβ*. So  
 erat. Eccles. Hist. l. 2.  
 c. 20.

\* this unusual Concussion of the Earth seem'd to be a certain Sign of the Shakings and Convulsions, the Tumults and Disorders, which afterwards were in the Christian Church. The Author of the *Byzantine Annals* giving an account of the Earthquakes and Comets, and other Terrible Accidents in the Reign of *Constantinus Dux*, utters these remarkable words, \* *These Occurrences which then happened were Punishments for sin, and marks of the Divine Anger, by which, Invasion and Slaughter were portended to the Nation: For by Prodigies set up by God, not only things present, but future are declared and foretold.*

and in the *Writings* of the Jews, and in *Ecclesiastical Authors*, I will also mention what *Prophane and Gentile Writers* have said of this matter. It is the Observation of the Antient Father of History, *Herodotus*, That \* *as often as Extraordinary Evils and Calamities besal a City or Nation, they are wont to be foreshewn, viz. by some unusual Sign.* And again, he saith in another place, \* *The things which happen by Divine Appointment, are declared, and foresignified by many Signs.*

\* *Thucydides*, a very Grave Author, takes notice, that immediately before the *Peloponnesian War*, which proved so fatal, there were Earthquakes, Eclipses of the Sun, Drought, Famine, Pestilence, that were the fore-runners of it. *Lucan* recounts the prodigies which happened before the Civil Eruptions between *Cesar* and *Pompey*, and acquaints us, That the whole Theater of the World was filled with them:

*Superique minaces*

*Prodigia terras impleverunt, aethera, pontum. Pharsal. 1.*

The Earth, the Skies, the Seas did all abound with those Strange Appearances.

*Du Cassius* speaking of the Fight between *Cesar* and *Anthony*, asserts, That there were Great and Wonderful Signs appeared before it; and he adds withal, That \* *God always foretells extraordinary Events by this sort of Occurrences:* And afterwards he calls these \* *such Signs as are wont to happen before very great Calamities.* *Virgil* concludes the first Book of his *Georgicks*, with the enumeration of several Prodigies, which presignified the Death of *J. Cesar* and were fore-runners of the Civil Wars which succeeded. He particularly mentions

*Atmorium*

*Armorum sonitum toto Germaniaeculo*

**Landmark.**

What Strange Armies were seen and heard in the Air. And others have taken notice in a more special manner of this kind of Prodiges.

*Arma ferunt inter nigras, crepitantia nubes.*

*Terribilisque tubas, auditaque cornua cælo*

*Præmonnisse nefas.* Metamorph. l. 15.

*Ovid* remarks that strange Sighs and Noises in the Clouds, prefiged the Death of that Great Man, who fell by the Senate. And sometimes the loud Voices and Shoutings of Men, Clattering of Armour, and Prancing of Horses were heard, but nothing was seen, as a \* *Greek* Historian observes, and reckons them as fore-runners of Civil Wars.

Moreover, not only *Antient* but *Modern Writers* give their suffrage here, and furnish us with instances to prove what we have asserted. † *Two sufficient Authors* assure us that *Armies in the Air*, and other strange Sights and Noises were seen and heard at *Vienna* before the first coming of the *Turks* thither.

and laying Siege to it. \* *Melanchron*, a person of long & unobscured known truth and integrity, assertions us that Armies in the Clouds were frequently seen in *Germany*, from the year 1524 to the year 1548. There are some who imagin the Clouds may by chance fall into the shape of Horses and Men, and the Winds ruffling the Clouds and beating them backward and forward may make them seem to encounter one another; And upon Thunder and Lightning there may be a resemblance of great Guns going off: Thus they impute all to the Natural position and structure of the Clouds. But to think that this is the true solving of this Phenomenon is to fond and idle that I cannot believe it will be the sentiment of any Sober and Considerable person. Spectacles of so Composed a trancie are not that works of mere Chance. Besides, the ex-

\* Αρσένι Τε Μαρτύ  
...  
...  
...  
Appian Civil ...  
...  
† Scheretznaus & Láva-  
ter de Spectris.

† Metor. lib. 2. Melan-  
chton.

Bar Options: a per-

to the year 1548.

...and beating them

encounter one another, be a resemblance

the Natural position

is the true loving  
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to be prefiges of ap-

philosopher and noted

these Armies in the  
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no had no great kind-

and instances, that the

## oms and Common-wealths



1000



† Disput. de Repub. L.  
1. c. 55. p. 229.

wealths are foretold by Signs and Prodigies. † I cannot (saith he) but acknowledge my self ignorant of the cause, but the thing it self I cannot but own to be true, both from antient and latter instances, that all the great Comotions and Changes which have at any time happened to Cities, or whole Countries, have been constantly foretold either by some Diviner, or by discoveries made by Prodigies and Signs in the Heavens. And he pertinently takes notice of what appeared in Italy of this nature, and shews the strange events thereby portended.

\* De Ostentis.

Joachim \* Camerarius, a man of great Learning, and vast Experience, hath writ of the several Prodigies seen in his time, and he declares that they were tokens of dismal event. Capel Brucens, another excellent person, and an eminent Chronologer, freely gives his judgment in this point, and tells us, that publick Slaughters and Miseries are before hand declared by certain Previous signs in nature, that they may be Sermons and Warnings to us of the wrath of God, and call us to Repentance. Sir Walter Raleigh hath these memorable words, Some wise men not superstitious, but discretely do think prodigious signs from Heaven or on Earth are not to be neglected. Read what the Learned Gronius (a man of that Compo-

† Calles publicas quando gravia in naturis signis portendit ac pœnuntiat, ut sine concubis de ira Dei & aliquos revocet ad pœnitentiam. Epist. Dec. ante Chronic. Carion.

† The Acts of the Em-

per.

† The Acts of the Em-

per.

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per.

gar Opinions, a person indeed who had nothing common and vulgar in his Judgment, is said to have delivered in his Annotations in these few words,

† Solent magnas rerum conversiones præcedere Cometae. Gladii Ardentes aliæque Signa ejusmodi. In Joeli cap. 2. v. 30.

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I will conclude with that Notable Remark of a Modern Historian, who taking notice of the Prodigies which preceded the Wars of Germany, speaks thus, \* That fatal Torch which appeared toward the end of the Year 1618, with a long and formidable Tail, seemed to denounce to us the Wrath of God, thereby to prepare us to repentance, or

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else patiently to suffer the Evils that we could not avoid. Those Signs which were seen in the Air in many places, those Tempests, those Examinations of Rivers, those Disruptions or Shiverings of Bars by the merciless Ocean, those Earthquakes and Inundations, those Monstrous productions, those Waters turn'd into Blood, those Impetuous Winds which have overthrown so many Towers, and rooted up so many Trees: those Bloody Rains, and so many other Supernatural Accidents, are the Missengers of Divine Indignation so fresh as are of late in their wickedness. Thus that Author, who is wont to mingle Devout and Pious Speculations with his History, in concluding his second Book to which I have now

Thus you see what is the Sense of all Ranks of Men, Fathers, Philosophers, Poets, Physicians, Statesmen, Lawyer, Divines, Historians; yea, Men of the most different Religions, Jews, Pagans, Christians, Protestants, Papists agree in this, that the things above named portend great Changes to the Publick; Therefore it is to be wondered at, that the Observation of Prodigious is reckoned by a late Writer as one in the Instance of some Men's *Judaizing*. and do not see how these two are a Kind, for I have proved, that God hath given notice of his approaching Judgments by unusual Signs and Appearances, not only among the Jews, but likewise under the Christian and Gospel Dispensation. This I have made good by an Induction of several Instances. And if God do still speak to the Inhabitants of the Earth by *Prodigious Signs*, certainly they ought to attend to them; and it can be no *Superstition* (what ever that Author suggests) to do so. The Gravest and Sobrest Heads have not disdained this Contemplation. The most Evangelick Minds have been exercised herein, and therefore it is cannottully be thought to be any tendency to *Judaism*. What the Apocryphal Writer delivered long ago looks true under the Occasion of the Gospel. \* *The times of* *Isaiah 9. 1.* *the Highest have plain beginnings in Wonders and powerful Works, and ending in Effects and Signs.* These Times are still in being, and these Signs are yet to be seen Signs which foretel future Calamities to a Nation.

Let us then reflect on those Divine Tokens, which we of this Nation are not strangers to. Many Wonderful Appearances have been in our days. The Earth, the Air, the Waters have afforded several portentous Accidents. The face of the Skies hath been disguised, and the Clouds have not been void of Terrible Images and Representations. As for the Heavenly Bodies, they have put on strange and ominous looks, and have appeared with affrighting and amazing countenances. The Glorious Luminaries have been changed and disfigured, as boding some remarkable shifts and alterations here below. Many Men shall step forth, and say he hath seen none of these things, or if he had, he will not believe that they are Heralds of the Divine Displeasure. I can point him to that which he cannot deny to have been often seen with his own eyes, and to have been observed by all the Inhabitants of the Land, I mean those *Prodigious Comets*, which shook their flaming Tails over our heads, and shot their fiery rays at us, with much anger and fierceness. I will not in this place, undertake to make it

appeal, that the Apparitions of *Comets*, are Signs of insuing evil to a Nation; and that there is a manifest connection between the things signified, and the Signs (which some are very unwilling to grant) I will not, I say, undertake this now, because I find it done already in a \* Particular Discourse, (*Cometomania*; or, a Discourse of *Comets*.) wherein the Author hath endeavour'd even to gratifie the most Inquisitive, and to entertain the Philosophical and Curious. I will only at present make my Appeal to those who are Sober and Impartial Judges, whether We of this Nation have, not had some proof already of the power and influence of those Celestial Signs. Did not those flaming Torches, which appear'd in Sixty Four, and Sixty Five, usher in, and preface, a *Raging Pestilence*, and a *Devouring Fire*, two of the most Tremendous Judgments that can happen to a place, or People? We then gaz'd on those Glaring Lights of Heaven, but how few of us were moved at their strange appearance? But if we neglect the remembrance of them now (especially seeing other Messengers of the like nature have appear'd in the Heavens) we are inexorable. Can the Dire Effects of *Comets*, be demonstrated by more pregnant Instances and Consequences, than so general and spreading a Mortality, and the consuming of one year and famed a City to Ashes? And surely those *Comets* which appear'd, especially that in Eighty, which was of so vast and unusual Magnitude, were not plac'd in the Heavens for nothing. No, no. We have experienced the Stupendous Events which were signified by the arrival and appearance of those wonderful Messengers. It is evident that those Heavenly Flames were set up to be an intimation of those mighty things which have since come to pass, and to forewarn us of those infinite Dangers we were liable to. They will for the future be believed to be Forerunners and Monitors, Heralds and Prognosticks of impending Judgments, against all the Objections and Cavils of some daring Pens to the contrary.

And now of late we have been alarmed with a Prodigy of another nature, the Trembling and Shaking of the Earth. We would not be affected with what appeared over our heads: And now behold! We are call'd to take notice of what is felt under our feet. This is a very remarkable and astonishing act of Providence, and it will concern us to enquire into the meaning of it. For it is certain, that there is some great thing portended by an Occurrence of this extraordinary nature, as all wise and considerate persons have ever confest. That thereof is the thing which I will undertake: I will briefly and plainly suggest what I conceive is the signification of this Prodigious Accident. So far as I can apprehend this *Shaking of the Earth*, signifies and foretels, at least intimates to us and warns us of

1. A Greater Judgment of the same kind; another Earthquake more terrible. For if the Windy and Turbulent Mater within the Bowels of the Earth, which was the cause of this surprising event, be not spent and exhausted, which it is likely must be done by a violent and sudden Eruption of it, which will necessarily break and scatter those parts of the Earth which have

## By the late Terrible Earthquake.

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vent, then we may expect an Earthquake of a more violent nature, and such as will prove very fatal and destructive. Let us not therefore think ourselves secure, but let us be daily preparing our selves for it. But without let us incessantly pray that God would be pleased to prevent and avert it. For I do not here pronounce any thing positively and peremptorily, but only suggest to you what we may justly fear, and look for, and that even in the nature of the thing it self. But God can overrule all Natural Causes, and can by ways and means, which we know nothing of, prevent all future danger of this kind. And I question not but he will, if we turn from our former sins, and be heartily sorry for our past transgressions. Otherwise we may expect to be visited with a greater Calamity, and to be cut off in our sins, unless God for his own Names sake, and out of meer Grace and Pity shall think good to spare us. We have heard what hath been the lamentable fate of some others, where Earthquakes have happen'd: Great numbers have been swallowed up alive by the gaping Earth, and have been buried in its Bowels: And the Circumstances of those that survived, were unspeakably miserable and forlorn. On which occasion let us remember our Saviour's words, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* We shall all experience the like Severity of God, unless we resolve for the future to renounce our evil ways: to amend our Lives, to devote our selves to God's Service, and live to his Glory.

II: God's *Shaking of the Earth*, is a Token of God's Power and Sovereignty, and of his Universal Dominion over the Inhabitants of the World. Therefore you will frequently find in the Scripture, that these Attributes of God are set forth and express'd by his *moving of the Earth*, and his *Shaking the Foundations of it*. And his actual doing of it is recorded in the same Holy Writings, as an exertment of his Sovereign Power, and it is intended to strike terror into the hearts of Men, and to beget in them an awful sense of the Divine Majesty. Thus we read that when God designed to give proof to the *Israelites*, that he was their absolute Sovereign, Lord and Law-giver, he caused *Moun Sinai* (the place where he appeared to them) to *quake greatly*, 19. Ex. 18. The Son of God when he hung upon the Cross, and was necessary to give some undeniable evidence that he was God indeed, did it by exerting this signal act of his Power and Might, as the Evangelical History testifies, 27. Mat. 51. *The Earth did quake, and the Rocks rent.* And observe the event of it, Vers. 54. *When the Centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the Earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, truly this was the Son of God.* The moving of the Earth is such a proof of the Divine Power, that it even forced an acknowledgment from the most hardened *Pagans*. So when Christ at his Resurrection designed to express his Irresistible Power and Sovereignty, there was a great Earthquake, 28. Mat. 2. and it is not to be questioned, but that this was as effectual to convince Men of Christ's Almighty Power, as that at his Passion. Such another Instance we have in 16. Acts 16. *There was a great Earthquake, so that the Foundations of the Prison were shaken:* and see the effect of it, Vers.

Verf. 29. *The Jaihs came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* We see then what is the Significance of this late Trembling of the Earth, it is to put us into the lame posture, it is to make us tremble, and stand in awe of the Divine Majesty, and to acknowledge his transcendent Excellency, his Greatness and Supremacy. It is to rouse the *Jaihs* of our days, and to remind them of that Being which is endued with Infinite power, and can do what he pleaseth in Heaven and Earth.

III. It is a sign of God's great Displeasure and Anger. Accordingly we find it threatened as a token of his anger against *Jerusalem* 29. *Isa. 6. Thou shalt be quaked of the Lord of Hosts with Earthquake, and great noise, &c.* This and the like Prodiges are Divine Menaces, they are certain Marks of the Wrath of the Almighty, because of our sins. Wherefore on this account especially let us take notice of the late Hand of God towards us, in that sudden Trembling of the Earth, and let it put us in mind of our Sins, which are the only cause of God's Displeasure. The main Lesson we are taught by it is that in 4. *Psalm. 4. Stand in awe, and sin not.* Whilst so many remain stupid and senseless, let us be apprehensive of the Almighty's Hand stretched out against us: Let us be deeply affected with this extraordinary Dispensation: Let us with the Psalmist, be afraid of God's Judgments. Now God speaks with a loud Voice to this Nation to turn from their evil ways, *now he commands all Men everywhere to repent*, and to abandon their sins. This is that which this Remarkable Providence of God calls for. And the Lord enable us to do this speedily, lest our continuing in our Impenitence provoke him to cut us off speedily.

IV. Great Changes and Commotions are fore signified by this extraordinary agitation of the Earth. That such unusual and amazing acts of Providence are the forerunners of great Revolutions, hath been the universal knowledge of the wisest Heads. *Earthquakes* particularly are signs of the perturbations and troubled state of the Church, said the Ecclesiastical Historian, as we observed before. It was foretold in 24. *Mat. 7. that there should be great Earthquakes in divers places*, before the final change and extirpation of *Jerusalem*. Those commotions in the natural world portended greater and more horrible ones in the Civil and Ecclesiastical Policy of the Jews. I observe this likewise that in the holy Scriptures great alterations are express'd to us by *Earthquakes*, by *moving and shaking the earth*, and such like terms. This is the stile and idiom not only of the Old Testament but of the New, as is evident from several passages in the book of the *Revelation*: and therefore there is some foundation for what I have suggested, viz. that this particular sort of Prodiges is a signification of some notable Changes and Revolutions in the world, and particularly in this British Isle.

V. It is probable that the day of Judgment and end of the World are foretold and represented by this late wonderful Occurrence. These great *Earthquakes in divers places*, mentioned in 24. *Mat.* may be understood to be forerunners of the Last Day, as well as the destruction of *Jerusalem*:



For this was designed without doubt by the Holy Ghost to be a type and representation of that. Therefore 'tis worth our observing, that there have been of late, that is, within these nine or ten years, more Earthquakes than there had been two hundred years before. Which should remind us of our Saviours Prophecy, and induce us to believe that the great and Terrible Day of the Lord is approaching, when he will judge the world in righteousness, and these numerous *Earthquakes in divers places* are the harbingers and presagers of it. Let us then be effectually reminded by this late shaking of the Earth, of that last Terrible Revolution, when the Earth and the Heavens shall be dissolved, and when our Lord shall come in flaming fire to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of his Son Jesus. Let us watch and pray, and with faith and patience expect our Lords coming. Let us be in readiness to meet the Bridegroom who cometh at midnight, at the time when the jovial world thinks not of it. Thus I have freely given you my sentiments concerning this late Prodigy, and others which we have had before; and I leave the considerate reader to judge of what I have said.

To shut up this part of my Discourse, I might remind you that there are two persons who have writ of this subject, the one dispersedly, in his several writings (especially in his Sermons on 13. *Luke* 5. and 21. *Luke* 25.) the other *professedly*, in a particular Treatise: But they have done it in a very different way. The one hath a huge veneration for Prodigies and Divine Signs, and makes frequent discoveries of them in Gods administrations in the whole world: the other is as warm against them, and will not be persuaded that such things ever happen. The one thinks he sees a Prodigy in most of the great and extraordinary accidents on the stage of the World; the other shuts his eyes, and refuses to see such things any where. That which I shall suggest concerning those Dissenters is this, that if the Doctrine of the former be thought by some to betray too much Fear and Indignation, the latter is guilty of too much Boldness and Insensibleness: If the former Approaches to Superstition, the latter may be suspected to lead us to Atheism. Both these Extreams are hugely dangerous, and are with great care to be avoided. As we must not be misled by Fancy and Credulity, so on the other side, we must not shut our Eyes at the *plain Discoveries* which God is pleased to make in the World, I mean of his designs of Vengeance and Punishment to a Nation, among which I reckon, and not without cause, those *Unusual Accidents* above named. I have the longer insisted on this Subject because some are prejudiced against it, and will by no means believe that there are any such things as *Prodigies* and *Portentous Indications*. Therefore I was desirous to satisfy you from the serious consideration of foregoing Instances, and from the Suffrage of the most Wise and Intelligent, that *Prodigies* are not the effect of Imagination and Fancy, but that they are really existing in the World, and that God is pleased sometimes to give notice of his Displeasure against a People by these *Strange Signs* and *Wonders* in the Heavens and on the Earth.



But if after all that hath been suggested, some will stand up, and confidently maintain that this and the forementioned particulars have nothing of *Presage* in them, that God *speaks not* by these concerning the plucking up and pulling down of a Kingdom: They see no boding tokens and signs: The timorous and faint-hearted are the only people that make discoveries of such things: This is the attainment of the melancholly and discontented. It is black and sooty Choler which makes things look so dark and dismal. Apparitions and strange sights are the delusions of some poor Travellers, who are jogging on the Road before their Eyes are quite open, or who stay abroad so late that they are almost shut. Or, say that there are such affrighting things that are talk'd of, yet this is to be said, that they have been laugh'd at, and written against by very worthy and reverend men. As for *Prophecies*, and the Denunciations of Gods messengers, they are out of date now adays: there are no Seers to be expected in this blind Age of the World. If any have pretended to a greater foresight than others, we are not bound to credit what they say, for *all things continue as they were from the beginning* (as some of their perswasion and principles long since observed.) As for what *other Nations* have suffered, that concerns not us. We are hale and prosperous, and surely there is no infection in Bodies Politick. What then have the judgments which have lighted on others to do with us? And whereas 'tis said that the *lesser Judgments* which we have felt are forerunners of *Greater*, we are rather willing to believe that the worst is past, and that what we have felt already is the greatest evil we shall undergo. If you hear any persons talk after this rate, you may conclude it to be the language of *Atheists*, and no others: and it deserves nothing but contempt and scorn. Such men are unwilling to acknowledge a supreme Ruler and Governour of the world, and therefore it is no wonder that they deny all proofs of his ruling and governing, and will not take notice of the tokens and demonstrations of his anger towards sinners. But I thought it my duty to put you in mind of them, and accordingly I have briefly presented to your view the *diverse intimations* of a Kingdoms ruin, the *sundry presages* of Gods pulling down, and plucking up, and destroying a sinful Land.

The practical result of all that you have heard is this: 1. That you be sensible of these symptoms of Destruction. 2. That you be exhorted to make a right use of them. 3. That you take care to prevent the impendent judgments, by speedy repentance. For as I have made an impartial Inquiry into the dreadful presages of a general Judgment on this Nation, so now I am desirous to direct you to the proper and only means of avoiding the Divine Vengeance, which is the next thing contained in the words.

I. Be *sensible* of these things which I have suggested to you. Since God hath been pleased to *speake* to you in *divers manners*, it is your duty and interest to attend to his voice. Let me use our Saviours words, *Matt. 24. 32. Learn a parable of the fig-tree: when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh, so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things* (or most of them which I have been treating of)

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know that it is near, even at the doors. I will not add what follows in the next Verse, *This Generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled*; For it is my Business at present to put you into a way whereby you may prevent all these Evils and Calamities that are threatened. But this cannot be done unless you first of all be *Apprehensive* of these sundry manifestations of Gods wrath, and be thoroughly sensible of the Tokens of his Indignation. *That none of these things which I have spoken come upon you*, you must be careful to take notice of these Marks of God's Displeasure, to *Observe* and *Discern* the Signs of the Times, to *Hearken* to the Voice of Gods displeasure. And to imprint this the deeper on your minds, you ought to remember that there cannot be a more infallible sign of a Nations Ruin than their being senseless and stupid, and no ways Regardful of the Sins and Judgments they labour under. When Men will not be made Apprehensive of either of these, but *bless themselves in their hearts; saying they shall have Peace*, then there cannot be a more certain Prognostick of a Peoples Destruction. When all the Plagues and Judgments which were sent upon *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* did rather harden their Hearts, than melt them into Sorrow and Repentance, it was easie to guess that their Final Ruin was not far off. When God threatened to *smite the Jews with Blindness*, he added likewise what should be the effect of it, *viz. They should not prosper in their ways, and they should be oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man should save them.* Deut. 28. 28, 29. This may be the meaning of the 3th. of *Isaiah* 13. *Therefore my People are gone into Captivity, because they have no knowledge, therefore they are destroyed, because they are Senseless, and will not know and perceive their danger. They refuse to understand and consider what their Condition is, and 'tis no wonder that they fall into miseries, and that without remedy.* Of such Persons as these the same Prophet speaks, Chap. 28. v. 14. 15. *Hear the Word of the Lord; ye scornful Men* (you that think your selves secure, and therefore scorn and deride all the Threatnings and Judgments of God :) *Ye have said, we have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at Agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us.* This is the Language of Stupidity and Sottishness, of Insensibility and gross Security. And this is the usual practice of Sinners, *viz. to perfwade themselves that Punishments and Judgments and deadly Plagues shall not overtake them, notwithstanding their persisting in their Sins and Provocations.* But certainly there cannot be a more evident Token that Judgments and Plagues are near at hand. When you read that God speaks after this manner to his Prophet, *go tell this People, hear ye indeed, but understand not: See ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the Heart of these People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes, &c.* Expect to hear in the next words, of their Cities being wasted without Inhabitant, and their Houses without Man and their Land utterly desolate. *Isai. 6. 9, 10.* That Spiritual Judgment was a forerunner of this Temporal one: When they were made *insensible*, they were ripe for Destruction. This is implied in the Prophet *Jeremy's* words in the 12th.

Chapter and 4th. Verse: *How long shall the Land mourn, and the Herbs of every Field wither; for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? The Beasts are consumed, and the Birds, (all things for the use and service of Man's Life are blasted and cursed) because they said, He shall not see our last end; which words refer to the 5th. Chapter and 12th. Verse. They have belied the Lord, and said, It is not he, neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see Sword nor Famine; that is, they flattered and sooth'd themselves, and shut their Eyes against the plain Discoveries of God's Wrath against them: They would by no means believe the Prophecies and Denunciations which were uttered concerning their Destruction. This insensibleness did certainly betoken the Vengeance which was to issue. This is briefly summ'd up in those few words in the eleventh Verse of that 12th Chapter, The whole Land is made desolate because no man layeth it to heart. The Condition the Land is very sad and deplorable, but there is none that takes notice of it: Men generally are grown hard and stupid, and the Judgments which are abroad in the Earth make no impression upon them; but be it known to them that as this shall be the Cause of their Desolation, so it is a sure Sign that it shall come to pass.*

The Prophet *Hosea's* words concerning Israel are observable, *Hos. 7. 9. Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not, yea Gray Hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not. Gray Hairs are signs of declining Age, and Weakness of Nature, and so set forth here the weak and languishing state of this People: Now, when they either See not, or despise this Danger which they are in, it is a manifest Argument of their Ruine. To pass to the New Testament, you read there, that Christ came and wept over Jerusalem, wishing that Luke 9. 42. they had known in that their day the things which belonged to their Peace, and then proceeds to foretell the Ruine and Devastation of their City, and to give the reason of it, viz. because, v. 44. They knew not the time of their Visitation. Their Senselessness and Obduracy are assigned by our Saviour, as the cause of their Overthrow. Josephus observes, that before the Final Destruction of Jerusalem, they were not moved and wrought upon by those many Prodigies which hapned: Those extraordinary Voices and Sights left them as they found them, Deaf and Blind. They neither attended to them, nor believed them to be what they were, that is, Tokens of God's Anger. *ἡ δὲ πόλις ὁμοιωμένη αἰματὶ ἔκρινεν ὄφεις, ἰδιώτας, &c. De Bello Jud. l. 7. c. 12.* They interpreted some of these Signs according to their own Fancy and Pleasure, and others of them they despised, until their Folly was confuted by the utter ruine of their Country, and by their own overthrow. Nay, Tacitus tells us, that this besotted people, *Sibi tantam fatorum magnitudinem interpretati*, interpreted all those Ominous Occurrences in favour of themselves, and look'd on them as Signs of their good Fortune. Some of them thinking that That was the time foretold when some Eminent Person out of the East, and particularly out of Judea should be famous,*

mons for his Conquests, concluded those Prodigies to be no other than the  
 Effigies of so great a Victor. Thus, as God gives to Princes and People  
 a true understanding and sense of their Condition, when he designs their wel-  
 fare; so on the contrary, he makes Blindness and Insensibleness to be prehu-  
 sious to a Nations Ruine; according to the Observation of that worthy Servant  
 of God, *Martin Luther*, when God intendeth to destroy a Kingdom, a  
 Country, or a Principality, he takes from them *Wisdom*, that is, he blinds  
 them, and then bereaves them of their Power and Ability. So he in his  
*Colloq. Mansal*. If you see a people deprived of their Senses, and insatu-  
 rated, you may conclude their condition desperate, and that they are de-  
 stined to Misery, without any Remedy. This was the temper of the *Carthag-  
 enian Christians*, when the *Barbarians* came in upon them, as *Salvian de Prov. l. 6.*  
 a pious observer of God's Dispensations hath recorded. When some of their Bre-  
 thren were cruelly tormented by those Invaders, they laugh'd at their suf-  
 ferings, and would not be persuaded, that themselves were nearly concern-  
 ed in the Calamities which their fellow Christians underwent. When their  
 Savage Enemies laid Siege to them, they would not deny themselves the  
 liberty of their Feasts and Merriment. It was hard to tell, whether the  
 Noise of the Wars or of their Sportings and Revelings was loudest. Thus  
 it hapned to other Cities and Countries long before: Security was the fore-  
 runner and cause of their Destruction. We read in the Sacred Story, *Judg.*  
*18. 7, 27.* the people of *Lish* dwelt careless and secure, which gave occasion  
 to the Men of *Dan* to come upon them, and smite them with the Edge of  
 the Sword, and to burn their City with Fire. Pagan Records acquaint us,  
 That the Ancient and Famous City of *Sparta*, was never conquered, till  
 it was walled about. This created Security, and Security wrought their  
 Fall. That perhaps was a feigned Relation of the Poets concerning the  
*Trojans* (however, it may convey to us a real and useful Remark) that when  
 the Fatal Horse was brought before their Gates, they were almost as earnest  
 as their Enemies to have it taken in. So blind and besotted were those peo-  
 ple, that though *Apollo's* Priest cried out against it, and passionately dissuad-  
 ed them from receiving it within their Walls, and run his Spear into it,  
 and made the Armour clatter which was within; yet they were not appre-  
 hensive of the mischievous Present. The crafty *Sinon*, a Fugitive *Grecian*,  
 prevailed more with his Willy Tale and Counterfeit Tears than the wary  
 and honest-hearted *Laocoon* with his repeated Warnings and Dissuaves.  
 And so they haled in their Ruine with their own hands, and took pains to  
 draw the fatal Pile into their City, which proved their Overthrow. The  
 Application is easy, and I wish this Age would lay it to heart. The ge-  
 nerality of men are grown so foolish and senseless, as to court their own De-  
 struction, and wilfully to make way for that which will ruine them. They  
 greedily embrace their mischief, and delight to pull down Destruction on  
 their

their own Heads. They are warned of their danger, they are freely told of the extreme Peril they are in, but they will not give ear to it. This is the insatiation which so great numbers lye under at this day; and if the God of Heaven be not pleas'd very speedily to convince them of their Folly, it will prove their inevitable Destruction: For where a people are thus senseless and incorrigible; and take the course to destroy themselves, there is no hope of Help and Recovery. Every where you may behold men (like the ancient insensate Wretches before spoken of,) — *Scamus viroq, Sepulchro*; sunk into a dead Sleep, and overcome with Sottishness, and Debaucheries. God's faithful Ministers have the Fate of *Cassandra*, who foretold the fatal event of things, but found no Belief. They have cause to complain and cry out with the Prophet, *Who hath believed our Report?* It fares with them as with *Lot*, who when he told his Sons, that God would destroy *Sodom*, seemed to them as one that mocked. So foolish are most men, and slow of hearts to believe, what God's Messengers have spoken, what his good Providence hath discovered, what the Divine Mercy hath let before their Eyes, and called upon them to observe. The Voice of God, though very shrill and piercing, hath not awakned these Sleepers. They remain obdurate and unconcerned, notwithstanding the fearful Appearances of Wrath that are before their Eyes. Nothing will make Impression on this hardened, this Iron Age. Their Calamities are, so far from humbling them, that they seem to make them more Loose and Frolick. The banished *Hebrews* hung their Harps on the Willows; and that mournful Sable of God's Hand upon them, was a happy Preface of their Return from their Captivity. But our light and wanton Behaviour, portends the continuance and increase of our Distresses. Our unseasonable and lavish Mirth, our intemperate Jollity and Luxury, signify some great and lasting Evil to us. It is very ominous when God's Judgments make us rejoyce. So it is, we are most cheerful and brisk, when we have the greatest reason for the contrary. When *Domitian* had brought the *Roman Empire* so low, that they were forced in a most shameful manner to buy their Peace with the barbarous Nations, with very large Sums of Money; there were yet daily Triumphs at *Rome*, as if all were well. We have acted after the same manner; we have seem'd to be pleas'd with our Dangers; we have made Addresses to our Ruine, we have even triumph'd in our Misery. Such hath been our *Careless and Scandalous*! This is after the rate of the *Old World*, *Luke 17. 27.* who eat and drank, and married, and were given in marriage, and took no notice of the preparing of the Ark, which signified that a Fatal Deluge was at hand. And, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be, even his last coming to Judgement, *1 Thess. 5. 3.* when they shall say, *Peace and Safety, then sudden Destruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a woman with Child, and they shall not escape.* Of all the Signs of the approaching of the Day of Judgement, this seems to concern us most at this time.



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time. The generality of men indulge themselves in their Pleasures, and forget God and their Duty, and take no notice of the Judgments which hang over their heads, or of their Crying Sins, which are calling down those Judgments. I have met with *Petrus Licetus, J. C.* an Author who hath published a Book, with this Title, *De hujusce seculi Cacitate.* I appeal to you, whether it may not justly admit of another Edition in our Age. The Title fits these Times exactly, for we are blind and senseless; we go on in our Sins, and perceive not the Wrath of the Almighty; we provoke God daily, and yet are not apprehensive that he will punish us. This, this is an undeniable mark of Ruine. But the design of this Discourse, is to persuade you to open your eyes, and to see your Danger. *O that ye were so wise as to consider your latter end,* I mean the Close and Issue of a Nations great and manifold Provocations. The end of these things is deadly and destructive. Flatter not your selves then, and suffer not others to do it, but remember there was, *Ezek 13. 18.* a *Voe* pronounced to them, *that sowed Pillows to all Arm holes;* (so the false and fawning Prophetesses did, by these Types, assuring the People of the lasting Peace and Ease which the Land should enjoy) *and made Kerchiefs* (or any thing which binds and eyes fast, as the Original Word denotes) *upon the head of every Sinner,* (for all Persons of what age or growth soever) *to hunt Souls,* to destroy the people by this means, to persuade them, that they were as it were tyed and fastned to the Land, and should not be removed, and that no evil should happen to them, though they had so grievously Incensed God's Anger. But let none of *Us* be abused and deceived after this manner, and let us not be of the number of those who continue stupid and unconcerned in the midst of Danger, *1 Thess. 5. 6.* *Let us not Sleep, as do others, but let us watch, and be sober, lest the day of Vengeance overtake us as a Thief.* Let us know in this our day, the things which belong to our Peace, and understand what are the true Remedies of our Calamities. Arise, and rouze your selves, shake off your Poppy, disgorge your Opium, look about you, and know what you do. You are already in some measure, I question not, made sensible of your condition, but not enough. My hearty desire is, that you may be fully Awakned, and that your eyes may be broad open. I hope, after all the means that have been used to rouze the people of this Land, after all the Loud Alarms which have been amongst them, they will fall asleep no more, and never be guilty of their former Drowziness and Dolefulness, their inexcusable Blockishness and Stupidity. This is the first thing I commend to you, and without this, there is no good to be done. That is the reason, why I have been so large in this particular. And because I have been so, I will be the more concise in the following ones. Only I beg of you, that you would seriously consider, and lay it to heart, what hath been now suggested to you.

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2. Having then arrived to a *Sense* and *Discerning* of the state you are in, and being made *Apprehensive* of the Divine Admonitions and Warnings, in the next place be exhorted to make a *right use* of them. If you have attained to an understanding of the Times (as it is laid in 1 Chron. 12. 32.) let it be to the end there mentioned, viz. *to know what you ought to do*. To direct you particularly, in reference to the forenamed Heads; *First*, Be perswaded to attend unto the Voice of God's Prophets, whether they were those of Old, whose Threatnings and Denunciations reach even Us, and relate to our present Condition, or whether they are such of God's Servants and Messengers as he hath raised up of late. You cannot say, [*You see not your Signs; or there is no more any Prophet*]. Blessed be God there have been some persons extraordinarily moved and stirred up to give Warning to this stupid and Lethargick Age, of the Judgments which hang over their Heads. And *shall a Trumpet be blown in the City* (by the Spiritual Watchmen) *and the People not be afraid*? Shall enlightened and Prophetick Souls be sent amongst us, and we not listen to their Summons and Warnings? *Secondly*, Let us mind Gods dealings with other Nations, and see our own Extirpation in their Ruin. Let us be admonished by them, to learn Righteousness, and not to dispise the Voice of God, and to violate his Laws. Let us not be found guilty of their sins, lest we partake of their Plagues.

*Thirdly*, View the lesser Judgments already inflicted on you, that they may not be a Prologue to greater and more Grievous Punishments: *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you*. *Fourthly*, Shut not your Eyes at those Remarkable Signs and Prodigies which have appeared amongst you, especially, Those Blazing Lights which God set up in your view not many years since. Tremble at the *Hand writing* which you saw in the Heavens: Read the Mind of God in those Red and Fiery Characters. Esteem them to be certain Tokens of Gods Displeasure: And whenever again such Wonderful Spectacles appear in our Horizon, be not so daring as to deride their flaming Train, but look on them with Reverence and Dread, and conclude them to be God's Harbingers and Heralds. Let these Divine Monitors direct you to your Duty: And as the *Magi* were guided to Christ by an unusual Star, so shew your selves truly Wise, by being led to him by these Extraordinary Signs from Heaven. And will you not remember, or rather can you forget the Hand of God, which hath been lately felt amongst us? Shall not the *Earth* as well as the Heavens, instruct us in our Duty? Shall we not be moved and affected with the Trembling of that Vast Element under us? Shall we not betake our selves to Prayer and Humiliation? Shall we not Abandon our sins, as the means to avert those Evils which were threatened by such Prodigious Occurrences? Which brings me to the Third and last Deduction from the Premises, which is This, let it be your main care and study to Prevent God's Terrible Sentence of Destruction against you; Let it be your concern to divert it by speedy

*Repentance.* For I need not here stand to prove, that generally Gods Denunciations of Judgment to a Nation (whether by Propheticall Intimations, or by Dreadful Prodiges; or by those other ways, before mentioned) are not Absolute and Irrevocable: At his most cleare from many places of the Old Testament; and particularly from my Text, that there is place left for Repentance: Let me prevail with you then to call your sins to remembrance, and so effectually represent them to your Consciences, as to work in you Amendment of Life. Shew that this great Change is wrought in you by Discouraging and Reproving the Crying Vices, and Iniquities of the Age, by opposing the general Profaneness which Reigns amongst Men; and if you be Reviled for so good a Cause, bear it with a Contented and Courageous Mind: Purge your own Hearts and Lives from Corruption and Disflement, that you may the more confidently call upon Others to mind a Religious Life, and that you may by your Holy Example and Practice win upon them. Assure your selves that it is dangerous not to Repent at any time; but that now is much more so; now when the Signs of Gods Anger have been so Visible amongst you. Resolve then now to relinquish the Evil Courses; and to betake your selves to your Duty with great seriousness and concern. That turning from your wicked ways, and bringing forth Fruit meet for Repentance, you may remove those dreadful Judgments which are impendent over you, and God may continue to shower down his Blessings and Mercies on this Nation: *Who can tell if God will turn and Repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?* *Jonah 3. 10.* Yes, we can tell that he will turn away from his anger, if we do so from our sins. For we have it from the mouth of God himself; that if that Nation against whom he hath pronounced, *turn from their Evil, then he will repent of the Evil that he thought to do unto them.*

You see what encouragement you have to discharge this Duty which I am now pressing upon you: If you Repent, God will Repent likewise: So he is pleased here and in other places to speak, that he may condescend to our shallow Conceptions, and signify his real Intentions of Mercy to us. God hath wrought Great and wonderful things for *England*: And we might expect far greater if we were truly Thankfull for what we have experienced already. The secret Plots and Contrivances of Blood-thirsty Men against us, have been marvellously brought to light; and their open Endeavours and Attempts have been defeated almost by a Miracle. We might thence take Comfort, if our Crying sins were not an impediment in the way, we might have ground of hope that God hath yet a kindness for this Land: *God. 1. 3. 23.* *If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have shewed us all these things; nor would at this time have done such things as these:* These Blessings surely are the Earnest of others: He bestows these favours on us to fit us for the reception of some thing which is yet to come. At least we may hope that the final and

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Irreversible Sentence is not yet gone out against us. Well, this is a Truth we may be certain of, and which we may all trust to, that as nothing but our Impenitence and Incurable Sinfulness can hinder us from being Partakers of the Divine Mercy, so nothing but our Repentance and Amendment can make us sharers in it. Our great Physician is willing to heal our Maladies, and cure all our Publick Distempers, and to restore unto us those Blessings which are so necessary for the happiness of this Land. But then we must follow his Advice and Prescriptions, which are no other than this, that we Repent and Reform our Lives. This we must do, and that speedily, before the Decree come forth against us. Let every one of us try to heart his Sins which have contributed towards those Judgments that have been abroad in the Land. Let every Soul resolve henceforth to quit those Practices which have procured such variety of Plagues to this Nation. Let all Ranks and Degrees, all Conditions and Orders of Men in good earnest amend their ways. Let Ministers and People, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants do it effectually. Let there be this universal Cry, and this only, throughout the whole Kingdom, who shall be most forward and zealous in the prosecution of this Duty!

I could press this upon you by many *Motives* and *Arguments*, but I will make use of these three only, and so put a period to the whole. *First*, what I have exhorted you to; I beseech you think of performing, *for your own sakes*. If you love your own safety, if you regard your Personal and particular welfare, I intreat you to be faithful and diligent in the discharge of what I now tender to you. If you have a kindness for your selves, you must needs do it. Again *for the good of your Families and of the whole Community* (to joyn both these in one) be perswaded to set about this Task. You may read in History that the Commanders of Armies generally in their Speeches to their Souldiers put them in mind of their dear Wives and Children at home, and of their Beloved Countrey which they fight for: And this is thought effectual to raise their Spirits and Courage to the highest pitch. Let me use the same Argument with you. As as you ought to do, behave your selves according to what I have suggested to you, and that for the sake of your near Relatives, your Families, and the Publick Interest. You are all embarked in the same bottom. If you be Persons of generous Spirits you will have a respect to the Community, whereof you are Members; You will be desirous to advance the Common good and prosperity of the Nation; which can never be effected but by your particular and personal Reformation; for the common Welfare depends upon your single Amendment, the Publick being made up of Individuals. Let this Consideration prevail with you. *Lastly*, do it *for the sake of Posterity*. Let the Generations yet to come be beholding to you: Lay an Obligation on the future Age, by being mindful of the true Concern of the Present one. Why should you be unkind to them that shall be

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be hereafter, and some of them nearly Related to you? Why should you entail a lasting Series of Calamities and Curses on the People that are not yet Born? Thus you are beset and environ'd with Arguments: You are concern'd on your own account, and on that of the whole Kingdom, and for succeeding Generations. As you regard your own Happiness both here and hereafter, as you love your Country, and value the Prosperity of the Land of your Nativity, as you desire to transmit the Gospel, and to convey all other Blessings to those that come after you, and in concurrence with all these to advance the Honour and Glory of the Eternal God, hearken unto what I have said, and be perswaded to turn from your Evil ways, and to break off your Sins by unfeigned Repentance.

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